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Report on ethnics 'flawed'

By LINCOLN DEPRADINE

A report recommending the federal government cut funding to community and ethno-racial groups has been condemned as "flawed" and "schizophrenic."

The report, officially titled "Strategic Evaluation of Multiculturalism Programs," was prepared by the Ottawa-based company Brighton Research, for the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Brighton Research concluded that giving money to ethnic organizations creates the impression that government is catering to special interest groups.

It suggested "the elimination of direct funding to ethno-cultural organizations," and instead channel the money to "public agencies and organizations."

Groups such as the Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA), the Coalition of Visible Minority Women (CVMW), the Chinese Canadian National

Council (CCNC) and the National Association of Japanese Canadians are urging the federal government to reject the proposal of Brighton Research.

JCA president Herman Stewart called the proposal "politically motivated."

He noted that national elections are expected to be held shortly, and said he is concerned that the ruling federal Liberal Party might implement the recommendation as a way of winning support from Canadians opposed to the country's 25-year-old multicultural policy.

"It seems that each time there is an election governments tend to beat up on the least vulnerable in society," Stewart told reporters Monday.



CONDEMNING the Brighton report: (l-r) Stephen Lee, Herman Stewart, Jennifer Hashimoto, Elaine Prescod, Audi Dharmalingam, Anthony Ayok Chol, Rochelle Wilner and Antoni Shelton.
Photo by Lincoln Depradine

He joined leaders of other organizations in slamming the Brighton re-

port, and in dismissing the claim that ethno-racial organizations are "special

interest" groups.

"I can't see how they can call us special interest,

while at the same time, appealing to us as citizens, to support national unity," said Stewart.

Elaine Prescod, executive director of the CVMW, added: "We are not special interest groups. We are the community (and) we are the heart of the country."

Audivaskar Dharmalingam, secretary of the Ontario Federation of Race Relations Organizations, accused Prime Minister Jean Chretien of being "very vague" on where he stands on multiculturalism.

He demanded that Chretien "take a definite stand" and make a "clear statement" on the issue.

See BRIGHTON page 8

Alexander to fight racism

Prime Minister Jean Chretien has appointed Lincoln Alexander, Onta-

rio's former Lieutenant-Governor, as chair of a newly created agency which will work to eliminate racism "and all forms of racial discrimination in

which will act at arm's length from the federal government.

It will receive a one-time endowment of \$24 million from the govern-

government to reject a proposal to cut funding to "ethno-racial organizations," saying the money is vitally needed for important services.

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Rewarding excellence

By LINCOLN DEPRADINE

The annual awards of excellence of the John Brooks Community Foundation and Scholarship Fund (JBCFSF) have been expanded with the support of Ryerson Polytechnic University.

Ryerson is now offering two \$1,500 scholarships to JBCFSF winners.

The first two recipients, Andrea Fraser and Shakeel Adam, received their scholarships last Saturday at the 15th annual awards of excellence of the JBCFSF.

Fraser, 20, said the scholarship will go a long way in helping her complete her business degree at Ryerson.

"I am very honoured that the John Brooks Foundation chose me as the recipient for this scholarship," she told *Share*.

Fraser, a graduate of Eastern High School of Commerce, is in her first year of university studies.

She said she is "very happy" to receive the scholarship, which she described as a "wonderful surprise."

Like Fraser, Adam is also studying at Ryerson.

The goal of the 18-year-old freshman is to become an aerospace engineer.

He, too, is "honoured" to be an inaugural winner of the Ryerson scholarship.

"It's a good feeling," he said. "It's nice to know that you are in the same company with all the other people who were chosen to receive awards."

Fraser and Adam

professionals from a wide variety of other fields joined in celebrating the students' awards, and in acknowledging volunteers Barbara Charames, Vincent Conville, Ezra Simms and Patricia Waldrop.

The four volunteers received "Community Service Awards."

Toronto Mayor Barbara Hall congratulated the JBCFSF for creating "positive role models," and for giving young people the opportunity to become "full players in society."

The keynote speaker, educator Kim Thomas, urged students to value their family and to have faith in God.

Thomas, a past scholarship recipient of the JBCFSF, said students also need to be "well-rounded" — developing spirit, mind and body — in order to overcome the obstacles they will face on the "life-long journey" of education.



SCHOLARSHIP winners included (l-r) Andrea Fraser, Gregory Grant, Michael Budd and Shakeel Adam.
Photo by Lincoln Depradine

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